

U. S. Treasury Department,

SECRET-SERVICE DIVISION,

OFFICE OF CHIEF,

Washington, D. C., Oct. 21st, 1887.

Hon D. M. Fox,
Supt. U. S. Mint,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Sir:

Your letter of 19th October, 1887 is received.

From its tenor I am led to infer that the party offering to sell counterfeit money is of the numerous class of swindlers known by the title of "Boodlers." Such persons never deal in it, but make a pretence of doing so on purpose to inveigle dishonest persons, who would buy counterfeit money if they could, into parting with their good money in the hope of getting counterfeit. These swindlers are usually located in large cities, but New York contains by far the larger number.

They send circulars in imitation of letters by thousands all over the country, inviting their correspondents to visit New York, naming the hotel at which they should stop, and offering them great inducements to purchase. Those who go after such bargains never obtain counterfeit money, and seldom return home without leaving all of their good money in the hands of these plausible but dangerous men.

In August, 1885, James T. Holland, of Abilene, Tex., allured to the city of New York by a circular similar to that forwarded by you, met Tom Davis and Theodore, his brother. These men, while pretending to sell Holland ten thousand dollars of so-called counterfeit money, but which were genuine notes, cheated him of his good money. Holland, at once discovering the cheat, shot Tom Davis, killing him instantly. A jury subsequently acquitted Holland.

Another practice is to toll on their victims by sending a **genuine** one or two dollar note, or parts of the same, and representing them to be specimens of the counterfeit notes they have for sale.

Under the various names of "Green Articles," "Green Cigars," "Green Leaves," &c, they offer for sale counterfeit money which is printed on plates stolen from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing of the Government. Not a plate of any kind has ever been stolen from that establishment.

Those who have counterfeit money for sale do not write letters requesting strangers to buy it. Even after the introduction of a new man by one counterfeiter to another, it takes a long time to establish such friendly relations as would induce a counterfeiter to trust a new-comer.

Yet thousands of criminally foolish people believe that they can purchase counterfeit money as they would butter or cheese, and, in their attempts to obtain it, are robbed, and an honest public sentiment says, "Serves them right."

The crime of which the "Boodler" is guilty is that of obtaining money under false pretences—an offence of which State statutes only take cognizance, and over which United States courts have no jurisdiction. It is next to impossible to obtain legal evidence against these swindlers; and were one of them arrested and brought to trial, the testimony of the main witness (he who lost the money) would be weakened by the fact that he **would have been** a criminal if he **could**.

This Office is in daily receipt of "Boodle" circulars, sent in from all parts of the country, hence the necessity of putting this explanatory statement in its present form.

Respectfully,

My dear Sir:
Mr Reid has been similarly advised

Chief.